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AN  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT  
OF  
STURBRIDGE,  
BURY,

AND THE MOST FAMOUS  
FAIRS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA;

INTERSPERSED WITH  
ANECDOTES

CURIOUS AND ENTERTAINING:

AND

Considerations upon the Origin, the Progress and Decline of all the temporary Marts in this Kingdom.

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CAMBRIDGE,

Printed by FLETCHER and HODSON, for the  
AUTHOR: and Sold by Mr. WOODYER, Book-  
seller, at Cambridge; and Mr. DECK, Bookseller,  
at Bury.

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# STURBRIDGE AND BURY FAIRS;

With an Account of the Games of the  
GREEKS and ROMANS — of the principal  
Fairs in EUROPE and AMERICA —  
and several ANECDOTES curious and  
entertaining.

**T**HE Institution of Fairs and Markets is coeval with the first rude outline of Society; as the People were emerging from primitive Barbarity, and began to live in Villages and incorporated Towns, their mutual Wants suggested them to improve their limited Property, and to exchange with their Neighbours superfluous Commodities for Necessaries; wholesome Food, and plain Raiment, easily acquired by their Labour and their Frugality, they aimed at the Conveniences of Life, and ashamed of their former Simplicity, their Houses, Furniture, Table, and Apparel exhibited a growing Elegance and Luxury which required the Assistance of the useful Arts. Thus disseminated by emulative Industry, Salesmen and Manufacturers overstocked with perishable Merchandize, resorted to divers Markets, and Sovereigns to  
B benefit

benefit several Lords and their Vassals, granted Charters for holding Fairs at stated Times in the Year. Several were held in open Fields, Heaths or Commons, under Tents, Booths, and Barracks erected for the purpose; others in Places walled in and formed into regular Streets, Lanes, &c. for the occasion, as the Fair of St. Lawrence in Paris; and some were kept in the open Places and Streets of Cities, as Bartholomew Fair, Bristol Fair, and the Fair of St. Germain; not only Merchants and Traders from divers Parts met at these Fairs to buy and sell Commodities, but a great Concourse of all Classes of People to partake of the Diversions usually accompanying such Assemblies.

The Games of Greece celebrated with the most pompous Solemnity, and frequented by Myriads of People from the Universe, may be reckoned the most splendid Fairs of Antiquity, as the immense Circus of these Races exhibited magnificent Pavilions with all the Dainties and Refreshments that could please the Palate, the most precious Jewels, the most costly Arms, the richest Tissues and Embroideries that could charm the Eye.

There were in Greece four renowned Games of that kind, the Olympic and Isthmian celebrated every fifth Year, the Nemean



Nemean every third Year, and the Pythian annually; they all lasted five days [4400]. The Olympic Games were first instituted by Hercules, in honour of Jupiter Olympius, in the Plains of Elis, near the City of Olympia, by five Kinds of Exercises, viz. Leaping, Running, Wrestling, Quoiting, and Whirlbats, a Kind of Gauntlet with Straps and leaden Plummets used at playing at Fifty-Cuffs.

These Games being discontinued after the Death of Hercules, were restored by Iphicus 442 Years after their first Institution [777 Years before Christ]: from this last Epocha the Greeks began to reckon by Olympiads, every one of which contained the Space of four whole Years, and this lasted after the Reform of the Calendar, even to the Reign of Constantine. Those who won the Prize, which was a Crown of Olive-tree, were called Olympionices, their Names were set down on public Record, and the Honour of Triumph was decreed to them. The first that was crowned at these Games was one Chorobæus, who obtained the Victory by Running.

The Pythian Games were instituted in Honour of Apollo, for having shot to Death the Serpent Python. The Conquerors were crowned with Laurel.

The Isthmian were by Theseus conse-

crated to Neptune, Hercules, and Palæmon Son of one of the Gods of the Sea: the Isthmus of Corinth was the Spot assigned for their Celebration. The Victors had a Crown of Pine-tree.

The Nemean Games were instituted either in Honour of Hercules, for having killed in the Forest of Nemea a Lyon of a prodigious Magnitude, at Cleonas, a City of Achaia in Peloponesus; or as some pretend, on account of Archemorus, the Son of Lycurgus, King of Nemea, slain by a Serpent. The Conquerors were crowned with Parsley. In all these Games, besides the Exercises mentioned before, there were Prizes adjudged to Poets who had excelled their Competitors in the Eulogy of Heroes and victorious Champions.

Sylla in the 175 Olympiad brought these Games to Rome, Cato superintended them, and Augustus instituted others like them, which he dedicated to Apollo after the Battle of Actium. Nero established in Imitation of the Olympic Games, Feasts kept yearly in Honour of Janus, on Mount Quirinal, and improved greatly the Splendor and Solemnity of them by Music and Dancing; he drove himself a Chariot with ten Horses coupled two and two, and won the Prize.

All the Spoils and Trophies of the conquered

quered Nations, with the Riches of the World, were displayed at these pompous Festivities. I hope this Digression will not be disagreeable to the Reader. Eric Puteanus has wrote a Treatise on the Fairs of the Romans, entitled, *Nova Fastorum Facula*.

The Fairs of later Institution are either free or charged with Tolls and Impositions. The Privileges of free Fairs consist chiefly, in that all Traders, whether Natives or Foreigners, are allowed to enter the Kingdom, and are under the Royal Safeguard and Protection, in coming and returning, they and their Agents with their Goods. The said Persons and their Effects are exempt from all Duties, Impositions, Tolls, and Servitudes. Merchants in going to and returning from the Fair cannot be arrested, nor their Goods stopped.

It is the Sovereign alone that has a Right by his Letters Patent, to establish Fairs, whether free or subject to Duties.

Free Fairs make a very considerable Article in the Commerce of Europe; especially that of the Mediterranean, and the Inland Parts of Germany, &c. where the continual Passage and Repassage of Vessels is impracticable.

The most celebrated Fairs in Europe are these:

The

The Fairs of Francfort on the River Maine, held twice a Year, in Spring and Autumn; each lasts fourteen Days. They are famous for the Sale of all Kinds of Commodities, but particularly the immense Quantity of curious Books in all dead and living Languages no where else to be found, and where the capital Book-sellers throughout all Europe used to furnish themselves.

The Fairs of Leipſic which are held thrice a Year; the first in January, the second after Easter, and a third after Michaelmas; they hold twelve Days each. Before the savage Barbarities and horrible Depredations of the Tyrant of the North in Saxony, these Fairs were in the highest Repute. The Magnificence of the two last Kings of Poland, with their splendid Household, and an excellent Italian Opera, rendered Leipſic at that time the most brilliant Court, and the richest Mart in Europe. Immense Magazines of Dresden China caused the Admiration of Strangers. The late Prince and Princess Electoral, with the Noblemen and Ladies of their Retinue, kept several Shops for their Diversion, and distributed compleat Services of China from the King's Magazines, and other precious Trinkets, to Persons of Distinction. The turbulent Frederic, jealous of the flourish-  
ing



ing Condition of that Electorate, with his baneful Legions spread Terror, Dissolution, and Wretchedness amidst the enslaved Saxons; in vain did this Enemy of Mankind attempt to establish at Francfort on the Oder a Fair on the Ruins of those of Leipzig, Commerce and the useful Arts flew at the Sound of his tremendous Chains.

The Fairs of Novi, a little City in the Milanese, under the Dominion of the Republic of Genoa; there are four in the Year, in February, May, August, and September. A vast Concourse of the most considerable Merchants and Negotiants of the neighbouring Kingdoms resort thither for the transacting of Affairs, and settling Accounts.

The Fairs of Riga, one in May, and the other in September. They are much frequented by the English, Dutch, and French Ships, as also from all Parts of the Baltic.

The Fair of Archangel, during which all the Trade Foreigners have with that City is managed; it commences in the Middle of August, and holds six Weeks. The Muscovite Merchants attend here from all Parts of that vast Empire; and the English, Dutch, French, Swedish, Danish, and other Ships in the Port of that City, on this Occasion, commonly amount

amount to Three Hundred. But this is not a free Fair, as the rest are; the Duties of Exportation and Importation are very strictly paid, and on a very high footing.

The Fair of St. Germain, one of the Suburbs of Paris, commences on the Third of February, and holds till Easter. It is only free for the first fifteen Days, and resorted by the Beau Monde of the Capital and the Environs, on account of its fine Shews and Exhibitions, which surpass any Thing of that Kind in Europe.

The Fairs of Lyons, which Mr. Duchesne in his Antiquity of Cities would insinuate from a Passage in Strabo were established by the Romans, though it is certain the Fairs as they now stand, are of much later Date. There are three in the Year, each lasting twenty Days, and free for ever; they begin on Easter Monday, the 26th of July, and the First of December. All the rich and inimitable Manufactures of Silk, Gold, and Silver Stuffs worked in that opulent City, are bought and sold for Exportation into all the States of Europe, and are wore every where by Persons of Fashion, though prohibited under the most severe Penalties.

The Fair of Beaucaire, held partly in a City of that Name in Languedoc, and partly

partly in the open Country under Tents. It commences on the 22d of July, and only holds for three Days; yet it is the greatest and the most celebrated of all the Fairs in that Part of Europe, both for the Concourse of Strangers from all Parts of the World, and for the Traffic of all Kinds of Goods; the Money returned in these three Days amounting sometimes to above 300,000l.

The Fairs of Porto Bello, Vera Cruz, and the Havanna, are the most considerable of all those in America. The two first last as long as the Flota and Gallions continue in those Parts, and the last is opened as soon as the Flota or Gallions arrive there upon their return from Spain; this being the Place where the two Fleets join.

Flota is a Name the Spaniards give particularly to the Ships which they send annually from Cadiz to the Port of Vera Cruz, to fetch the Merchandises gathered in Mexico for Spain. Those sent to fetch the Commodities prepared in Peru, are called Gallions.

The Spaniards send every Year two Fleets, the one for Mexico, which they call the Flota, and the other for Peru, which they call the Gallions. The Gallions are eight in Number of fifty Pieces of brass Cannon, besides which there is

a Patache of Advice; these are real Ships of War, and go on the King's Account: of Gold the Gallions bring yearly about two or three Millions of Crowns, and the Flota about one; of Silver the Gallions bring yearly 20,000 Crowns, and the Flota ten or twelve; of precious Stones the Gallions bring 600,000 Crowns worth. The Gallions are so loaden and embarrassed with Merchandises, that in case of an Attack they would find it difficult to defend themselves. Lord Anson acquired Wealth and Honours by the Prize of one of these Gallions; and the mercantile Part of the Nation wishes for a Spanish War, on account of the Riches of these Fleets. The Spanish Merchants send at the same time their Register Ships to Peru and Mexico.

The principal Fairs in the Kingdom next to Sturbridge, are those of Bristol, Portfdown, Bury, and Midsummer Fair near Cambridge. Portfdown is now become the first Fair in the Kingdom for Hops and Cheese.

The Fair of BURY ST. EDMUND, formerly one of the most resorted Marts in the Kingdom, was instituted as early as the Year 1272, in the latter part of Henry III<sup>d</sup>. Reign. This Monarch returning from Norwich, where he had been to quell a great Riot between the Citizens and



and the Monks, passed through Bury in his way to London; there he paid his Devotions to the Shrine of St. Edmund; and at the Requisition of Simon de Cutton, Abbot and Lord of Bury, he granted him a Charter for a Fair to be kept annually without the Precincts of the Monastery, three Days before, and three Days after the Feast of St. Matthew, which has been since protracted to an uncertain Length, for the Advantage of the Traders, and the Diversion of the Company. By this Charter the Abbot had the Tolls of the Fair, and the sole Government of it by his Steward, with the Oversight of the Weights and Measures, and the licensing of all the Booths thereof. The Townsmen, and all within a Mile round the Town, were then subject to the Abbot, and the Alderman at the Entrance upon his Office, swore before the Steward of the Abbey, that he should maintain the Peace of the Borough, and in nothing damage or hurt the Abbot or Convent in any of their Rights and Privileges. King Henry III. gave to this Monastery special Marks of his Favour, for having received 120 Marks of the Abbot and Monks, towards the Marriage of his Sister Isabella with Frederic, Emperor of Germany.

Bury was then the greatest Wool-Staple in the East of England, and is still very

considerable, employing the Poor in Combing and Spinning. The Wool Halls in St. Andrew's Street are very small, in Comparison of the spacious Magazines, where all the Wool of the County was deposited. Some of the Flemings brought hither by the Earl of Leicester, and several Artificers who came over with Queen Isabel, Consort of Edward II. established at Bury Woolen Manufactures.

The Tyranny of the Abbot, and the Oppression of his Officers, caused divers Insurrections of the Townsmen. In one of them, headed by Richard Drayton and Robert Foxton, the First of Edward III. [1327] they plundered the Church and the Abbey, and carried away their Charters, one of which was that granted for St. Matthew's Fair by Henry III. The Insurgents extorted a Charter from Richard de Draughton, Abbot of Bury, whom they kept Prisoner with some of his Monks, till they had sealed a Grant of the Tolls and Government of this Fair to the Guild of Merchants and Aldermen; but this Instrument drawn up by Compulsion, was declared void by the King's Manual Seal, and the Abbot restored to his Privileges. This Fair was since kept by Prescription, and the Monks taking Advantage of the credulous Superstition of the Times, made a consider-

considerable Collection in Vows, Masses, and Offerings to St. Edmund's Shrine amongst his Votaries. The Abbot kept an open Table whilst the Fair lasted for noble Guests, and Persons of inferior Rank were daily entertained in the Refectory with the Monks. There were different Rows assigned for the Manufacturers of Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, the Londoners, and the Dutch: the Jewellers, Silversmiths, Toymen, and Silk Mercers occupied all the Avenues to the Abbot's Palace. Minstrels, Juglers, and Mountebanks were commonly allowed to perform their Feats of Dexterity during the Fair, which brought thither a great Concourse of Gentlemen and Ladies from Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex.

Mary Tudor, Queen of France, Relict of Lewis XII. and Sister of Henry VIII. who married afterwards Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, went every Year from her Manor of Westthorp to this Fair; she had a magnificent Tent, with a splendid Retinue, and a Band of Music, to attend, and to recreate the Persons of Distinction who came to pay her Homage. The Duke, who was the most dexterous Man of his Age in Tilting, engaged from all Parts of the Kingdom several armed Knights to these martial Exercises, which made this Fair for some Years frequented by many noble Personages.

John

John Melford, the last Abbot, surrendering the Abbey at the Dissolution, the Alderman received the Toll, and assumed the Government of this Fair. King James I. in the 6th Year of his Reign gave the Reversion of the Fairs and Markets of Bury in free Farm to the Corporation.

The Market Cross is converted into a Theatre, used only during this Fair by the Norwich Comedians. This Fair has considerably decreased for forty Years past, and is now become rather a Place of Amusement than a temporary Mart, as most of the Merchandises now brought thither are chiefly Articles of Luxury and Curiosity.

John Lidgate, the famous Poet, who was a Monk of St. Edmund's, wrote an elegant Latin Poem upon Bury Fair in 1435.

This Fair is held on a spacious Plain, betwixt the magnificent Gate of the Abbey and the Town; it begins the Twenty-first of September, and lasts fourteen Days. It is the Rendezvous of the Beau Monde every Afternoon, who conclude their Evenings by the Plays or Assemblies. This Fair consists chiefly of several Rows of Haberdashers, Milliners, Mercers, Jewellers, Silversmiths, and Toy Shops, which make a fine Shew.

MIDSUMMER FAIR is of much more ancient Date than Sturbridge. Fuller attributes



tributes its Institution to Children frequently playing on the very Spot where it is kept at this Day; their Parents and Relations often accompanied them to prevent any Danger from the Vicinity of the Water, or to keep them off Hurt and Mischief: this Field being more and more resorted in the Summer Season, Booths were erected for the Accommodation and Entertainment of the Company; and at last some Pedlars began to sell their Wares as early as the Year 1106, in the Reign of Henry I. surnamed Beauclerk, or the Scholar, who had received the Elements of his Education at Cambridge Schools, long before it was an University. This Fair now consists chiefly of Earthen-Wares, a China Warehouse, where Gentlemen and Ladies Raffle every Evening for some useful and ornamental China, and some Booths for Refreshment: it lasts about three Weeks.

STURBRIDGE FAIR is so called from the Stur, a little Rivulet on both Sides where it is kept. Some pretend it took its Name from the Toll or Custom that was paid at the Bridge, for all Steers and young Cattle that passed there. According to Fuller, a Clothier of Kendal in Westmoreland, a Town even then, *Lanifici gloria et industria præcellens*, i. e. excelling in the Art and Renown of working

ing Wool, casually wetted his Cloth in the Stur, on the East of Cambridge, in his Passage to London; as the Cloth had been damaged by the Water, he exposed it there to sell, at a very low Rate; yet it seems he sold it for more than Prime Cost. He returned next Year with some other of his Townsmen, offering to sell Cloth unspotted, and of a better Quality. Their Success engaged their Fellow Citizens, with several other Sellers, Buyers, and Lookers-on to frequent this Place, which in a few Years became a considerable Mart for Wool Manufactures: in Memorial whereof the Burghers of Kendal challenged formerly the Privilege of chusing annually at Sturbridge Fair one of their Town to be chief Factor, before whom an antic Sword was carried, with some additional Mirth and Festivity. This Procession was disused in the Time of the Civil Wars.

Here was formerly an Hospital for Lepers, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, the Chapel of which is still standing near Paper-Mills, and is used as a Victualling-house in time of the Fair; their Burying-place was near Coldhams, around which some Houses formerly stood. This Hospital was under the Government of the Corporation of Cambridge, by a Lease of 99 Years; which in the Year 1245, was

was granted to the Bishops of Ely. It was leased by Henry VIII. on the Dissolution, to the Town of Cambridge for 60 Years; but the annual Value does not appear. In the 4th of James I. it was granted to John Shelbury and Philip Chewte, Gentlemen. The Chapel is also used as a Repository for the Timber to build the Booths.

Near half a Mile East of Barnwell Sturbridge Fair is kept, which is set out annually on the Fourth of September, by the Mayor, Aldermen, and the Rest of the Corporation of Cambridge, who all ride thither in a grand Procession, with Music playing before them, and most of the Boys of the Town on Horseback after them, who as soon as the Ceremony is read over, ride to the Limits of the Place; each Boy at his Return to Cambridge had formerly a Cake and some Ale at the Town-Hall.

Fourteen Days after, they ride in the same Manner to proclaim it, which being done, the Fair begins, and continues three Weeks, though the greatest Part is over in a Fortnight.

This Fair, which was once the greatest temporary Mart in the World, is yet considerable enough to deserve particular Notice. It is kept in a Corn Field, about half a Mile Square, having the River

D

Cam

Cam running on the North Side thereof, and the Rivulet called the Stour on the East Side. It is about two Miles East of Cambridge Market-Place, where, during the Fair, Coaches, Chaises, and Chariots attend to carry Persons to the Fair.

If the Field on which the Fair is kept is not cleared of the Corn by the Twenty-fourth of August, the Builders may trample it under Foot to build their Booths; and if the same be not cleared of the Booths, and Materials belonging thereto, by Michaelmas-Day at Noon, (Old Style) the Ploughmen may enter the same with their Horses, Ploughs, and Carts, and destroy whatever they find on the Premises. The Filth, Dung, and Straw left behind by the Fair-Keepers, make them Amends for their trampling and hardening the Ground.

The Shops or Booths are built in regular Rows like Streets, having each their Name; as Garlick Row, Ironmongers Row, Cook Row, and Booksellers Row; this last has been for several Years past deserted by Men eminent in that Trade. This Area was formerly divided into many Streets, which were called Cornhill, Cheapside, the Poultry, and by the Names of many other Streets in London, to distinguish them from each other. Among these Booths there were, not only  
Warehouses



Warehouses and Shops of almost every Kind of Commodity, sold Wholesale or Retail, and all Sorts of Traders, as Goldsmiths, Toymen, Jewellers, Braziers, Turners, Milliners, Haberdashers, Hatters, Mercers, Drapers, Pewterers, China Warehouses, and most Trades that can be found in London; but likewise Coffee-Houses, Taverns, Eating-Houses, Music Shops, Buildings for the Exhibition of Drolls, Puppet Shews, Legerdemain, Mountebanks, Wild Beasts, Monsters, Giants, Dwarfs, Rope Dancers, &c. Though there is an Act of Parliament which prohibits the acting of Plays within ten Miles of Cambridge, a Company or two of Players are allowed to perform during the Fair. Besides the Booths, there are six or seven brick Houses, built many Years ago, and in any of which the Country People are accommodated with hot or cold Goose, roast or boiled Pork, &c.

Crossing the main Road, at the South End of Garlick-Row, is a great Square, formed of the largest Booths, called the Duddery. This Area, from 240 to 300 Feet, is scarce inferior to Blackwell-Hall; it is chiefly taken up with Woollen-Drapers, Wholesale Taylors, and Sellers of Second-hand Cloaths, &c. where the Dealers have a Room before their Booths

to take down and open their Packs, and to bring in Waggon's to load and unload the same. In the Center of this Square was, within a few Years, erected a May-pole, with a Vane at the Top; and in this Square, on the two Sundays during the Fair, Morning and Afternoon, divine Service was read, and a Sermon preached from a Pulpit placed in the open Air, by the Minister of Barnwell, who was handsomely paid by the Contribution of the Fair Keepers.

In the Year 1710, a Dispute arising between the Corporation of Cambridge, and the Patron of Barnwell, concerning the Right of appointing a Sturbridge-Fair Preacher, caused the two following Advertisements to be published :

Sept. 11, 1710.

WHEREAS Mr. Mayor of Cambridge has actually this Year, contrary to Law, ancient Usage and Custom, set up an unlicensed Preacher at Sturbridge-Fair, in Opposition to the present Patron and Minister of Barnwell, who claim the Right of preaching there from immemorial Prescription: We the Patron and Minister thereof, do hereby make it known, in Vindication of our own just Rights, and those of the future Patrons and Ministers of the said Parish, that we shall deem the Person or Persons who have or shall presume,

*presume, in Opposition to us, to preach within the said Parish Bounds, to be Intruders upon our Privilege; and that we will use all lawful Means to assert and maintain our Title against all such Usurpers and their Abettors.*

Cambridge, Sept. 10, 1711.

**WHEREAS** 'tis the Resolution of the Corporation of Cambridge, against the present Incumbent of Barnwell, to set up a Preacher in Sturbridge-Fair; being led thereinto by artificially persuading some of his Predecessors into an illegal Note against the Patron, his Clerk, and Successors in the said Living: and Sturbridge-Fair being in the Parish of Little St. Andrew's Barnwell, and the Ministers thereof have (when Right and Law prevailed) Time out of Mind, without any Disturbance, (the said Corporation of Cambridge finding always a Pulpit) performed the Service of the two Lord's Days during the said Fair, with their Congregation, Service Books, Vestments, Pulpit Ornaments, and Parish Clerk, in Gratitude for the Collection that has been there always made, for the better Support of themselves under their small Parochial Income, till the last Year 1710, for which Intrusion then the unwary Usurper was censured in the Bishop's Ecclesiastical Court. These do humbly give Notice to the Gentlemen of the Fair, that the Pulpit not being allowed this Year as usual,  
and

*and it not being known soon enough to provide one, the Service of the next Lord's Day during this present Fair, will be performed in the Parish Church, Morning and Evening, by the Minister of Barnwell.*

WILL. PIERS.

For some Years past the Service has been performed in Barnwell Church.

In this Duddery only Woollen Goods have been sold to the Value of 100,000l. in less than a Week's Time; besides the prodigious Trade carried on here by the Wholesale Taylors from London, and most other Parts of England, who transact their Business wholly in their Pocket-Books, and meeting here their Chapmen from all Parts, make up their Accounts, receive Money chiefly in Bills, and take further Orders. These exceed by far the Sale of Goods actually brought to the Fair, and delivered in Kind; it having frequently happened, that the London Wholesale Men carried back Orders from their Dealers for 10,000l. worth of Goods a Man, and some much more; and once in this Duddery, it is said, there was a Booth, consisting of six Apartments, all belonging to a Dealer in Norwich Stuffs only, who had there above 20,000l. worth of those Goods.

The Manufacturers in Norfolk, Suffolk,  
and



and Essex, generally laid out 60,000*l.* in Wool and Leather; the Upholsterers and Ironmongers Wares amounted to a considerable Sum, and Hops to still more, the Price of which all over the Kingdom was generally settled at this Fair, and large Commissions were negotiated for all Parts of the Kingdom.

September 25th, being the Horse-Fair Day, an incredible Number of People resort thither, and all the Eating Houses swarm with Jockeys, who, like Locusts, devour all their Provisions.

During the Fair Colchester Oysters and White Herrings, just coming into Season, were brought in great Quantity.

Notwithstanding the Multiplicity of Business, and the Concourse of People, there is very seldom any Confusion or Disorder, by which Life and Property is endangered.

This Fair is in many Respects like a well ordered City. Here is a Court of Justice always open from Morning till Night, where the Mayor of Cambridge, or his Deputy, sits as Judge, determining all Controversies in Matters arising from the Business of the Fair, and seeing the Peace kept thereof, for which Purpose he has eight Servants, called *Red Coats*, attending him during the Fair, one or other of which are constantly at Hand in divers Places;  
and

and if any Dispute arises between Buyer and Seller, on calling out *Red Coat*, you have in an Instant one or more running to you, and if the Dispute is not quickly decided, the Offender is carried to the said Court, where the Case is determined in a summary Way, with Steadiness and Diligence, as is practised in those called Pye-Powder Courts in other Fairs, from which Sentence there lies no Appeal.

About two or three Days after the Horse-Fair the Country Gentry for several Miles round begin to come in with their Families, and lay out much Money among the Tradesmen, and in Shews.

Though the Corporation of Cambridge has the Tolls of this Fair, and the Government as aforesaid, yet the Body of the University has the Oversight of the Weights and Measures thereof, as well as at Midsummer and Reach Fairs, and the licensing of all Shew-Booths and Players; and the Proctors of the University keep a Court there also to hear Complaints about Weights and Measures, seek out and punish disorderly Women, and keep their Youth in Awe.

Many Traders with their Servants and Families lie in their Shops; their Beds are laid on Boards, nailed to four Pieces of Timber about a Foot from the Ground, and four Boards round, to keep the Persons

sons and their Cloaths from falling. A high Wind often blows down their Booths, as it did in 1741; and a heavy Ráin forces through the Hair Cloths that cover them. The Concourse of People whom Business and Dissipation concurred formerly to bring to this Place, was so great, that not only Cambridge, but all the neighbouring Villages were full, and even the Barns and Stables were converted into drinking Rooms and Lodgings for the meaner Sort of People. The heavy Goods from London are brought by Sea to Lynn, whence they are carried in Barges up the Ouse to the Cam. More than fifty Hackney Coaches from London have been frequently plying at this Place; and even Wherries brought from the Thames in Waggons to row People up and down the Cam.

The last Day of the Fair was formerly devoted to the Diversión of the Company, and diversified by several Exercises, as Horse and Foot Races, Wrestling, &c.

The excellent Causeway near this Place, which reaches near four Miles, was begun by Dr. Hervey, Master of Trinity-Hall, and finished by Wm. Wortes, Esq; of Cambridge.

This Fair, instituted by the Spirit and Perseverance of a few Clothiers of Kendal, met at first no Support from the Go-

E

vernment,

vernment, whose Sinews were outstretch-  
 ed in upholding the victorious Standards  
 of Henry V. on the Continent. His Pas-  
 sion for splendid Conquests, which daz-  
 zled the Multitude, made him neglect  
 Commerce, Manufactures, and the peace-  
 ful Arts. These foreign Conquests were  
 more ostentatious than useful, they ac-  
 quired the English Fame and Glory, but  
 no real Advantage and Prosperity. The  
 Nobility and Gentry despised, after the  
 Example of the Conqueror of France,  
 whomsoever did not follow the Camp,  
 and even the mercantile Part of the Na-  
 tion, abandoned their native Country, to  
 seek for new Settlements, into a distract-  
 ed Kingdom, whose Acquisition was pre-  
 carious, and whose Wretchedness left no  
 Room for commercial Advantage or In-  
 dustry. The few Woollen Manufactures  
 established in England by the Flemings,  
 under the Auspices of Edward III. were  
 at a Stand for Want of Artificers, and  
 whilst the Husbandmen become Soldiers,  
 preyed in France upon the scanty Provi-  
 sions of the vanquished, their Wives and  
 Children starved for Want of Employ-  
 ment amidst Bonfires and public Rejoic-  
 ings.

Notwithstanding the Calamities of the  
 Time, the Obstruction of Roads almost  
 impassable, and the great Distance of  
 Kendal



Kendal from Cambridge, some Woollen-Drapers ventured to bring their Clothes to Sturbridge on Packhorses; as they did not travel above fifteen Miles in a Day, they were about fifteen Days upon the Road. The Length and the Risk of the Voyage through St. George's into the English Channel, deterred them from sending their Goods by Sea, as no Ships were then insured. The Expences of these itinerant Traders did not commonly exceed Six-pence the Day for Man and Horse; and in Villages, which had then no Inns, they were entertained Gratis by some hospitable Husbandman, whose Kindness they repaid by some little Present to his Wife and Children. Instead of Money, the Kendal Clothiers bartered Part of their Woollen Manufactures for Saffron, and supplied with that Commodity the Druggists and the Apothecaries Shops of several Monasteries on their return Home.

After Henry V. had been declared Regent of France, and Successor to that Throne, by the famous Treaty of Troyes, all the Inhabitants of the French Provinces, who had sworn Fealty to the English Monarch, obtained Passes to come over for Pleasure or Business. Sturbridge Fair was, during the latter Part of his Reign, and the Minority of Henry VI.

much resorted to by French Mercers, Toy-men, Perfumers, Mountebanks, Rope-Dancers, &c. who introduced amongst us their Baubles, their Cookery, and their Follies. New Booths were erected every Year; and as early as the Middle of the fifteenth Century, Sturbridge Fair was in such a Repute, for Traffic and Amusements, that Richard the Great, Duke of York, and Earl of Cambridge, afterwards slain at Wakefield, spent a Day there in a Tent of Cloth of Gold, with several Noblemen and Ladies, attended by a Band of Music. Though Cambridge was far from the Seat of the Civil Wars betwixt the two contending Royal Houses of Lancaster and York; the Fair decreased considerably during this calamitous Period, as Traders were afraid to have their Goods intercepted by one or the other Party; the Burghers of Kendal especially terrified by the Depredations of formidable Armies in the North, durst not stir out of their Town, till the Conclusion of that Tragedy.

The Spirit of Gallantry which reigned in the Court of Edward IV. disseminated through all the Kingdom elegant Vice and Pageantry. In the Year 1481 a grotesque Masquerade of Londoners, personated for several Days at Sturbridge Fair, Lewis XI. King of France, habited like

like a Pilgrim, with his favourite Barber, and the emaciated Attendants of this distrustful and parsimonious Monarch, shut up in his Castle of Pleffis near Tours.

Richard III. in 1484 sent two Agents to Sturbridge Fair, to enquire sily from the Traders, how the Inhabitants of their respective Counties stood affected to him, and inclined to a Revolution in Favour of Henry Earl of Richmond; they purchased a vast Quantity of Goods, and praised the Tyrant as a most desirable Sovereign for a commercial People. The Sweating Sicknefs which in 1485 proved so fatal to the Kingdom, and to Cambridge in particular, greatly damaged the Fair.

Henry VII. by directing his greatest Efforts to promote Trade and Commerce, introduced a Spirit of Liberty among the People, and disengaged them from their Dependence on the Nobility. The great Lords before this happy Æra, bidding Defiance to the Sovereign, and oppressing their Vassals with Impunity, were intrenched in their Castles garrisoned by a Number of armed Men their Dependents. The Artificers, Victuallers, and Shop-Keepers settled in some Place adjacent, in order to furnish the Lord and his Attendants with what Necessaries they wanted. Henry invited them to a more  
com-

commercial Situation, and never omitted the Rights of Commerce in all his Treaties with foreign Princes.

About this Time [1508] the Europeans made new Discoveries and remote Acquisitions. The Portuguese had sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, and Columbus had made the Discovery of America. Henry gave a Patent to some Bristol Merchants to go in Quest of new Countries. He taught his Subjects Economy and Payment of their Debts, the great Incentives to Industry, by his own Example. Sturbridge Fair was greatly benefited by the Encouragement he gave to the rising Arts, all the new Manufactures established towards the End of his Reign, were brought to this famous Mart, even then reckoned the first in England. Minstrels, Rope Dancers, Mountebanks, &c. were by the King's Proclamation forbidden to perform in all the Fairs of the Kingdom. In 1523 George Foyster, and in 1534 Edward Thompson, Mayors of Cambridge, were excommunicated by the Vice Chancellor for Obstinacy, and prevented from keeping their Court at Sturbridge Fair.

The Tyranny and Persecution of Henry VIII. who had confiscated the Revenues of some Colleges at Cambridge, and enjoined them to discontinue their Lectures, hindered the Vice Chancellor from keep-  
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ing his Court at Sturbridge Fair for three Years successively. Towards the End of this Reign, Indigo was brought from India, and sold at this Fair.

In 1553 Christopher Frank, Mayor of Cambridge, refused to take his Oath to the Vice Chancellor, till forced by the Lord Protector's Letters. Some Vagrants, according to a late Act, were marked on the Breast with the Letter V, imprinted with an hot Iron at Sturbridge Fair, by a Sentence of the Mayor's Court. He entertained this Year in his Booth, the Knights of the Shire, and the Burgessees for the Town: the first were then allowed by their Constituents, Stat. 35. Henry VIII. 11. Four Shillings a Day, and the last two, for their Attendance in Parliament.

In the last Year of Queen Mary's Reign, the University, necessitated for Money, were about to contract with the Townsmen for a small Sum, to sell unto them all the Privileges in that Fair [1557], had not Dr. Robert Brassey, Provost of King's, by his strenuous Opposition, preserved the same to the University.

These Privileges were confirmed by Charter of Queen Elizabeth, before the Lord Chancellor, my Lord of Canterbury, and the Duke of Norfolk, there being also present my Lord Marquis of Exeter,

**Exeter**, when it was decreed by the said Lords that Sturbridge Fair was in the Suburbs of Cambridge, and that the Vice Chancellor, or his Commissary, might keep Court Civil there for Pleas, where a Scholar, or a privileged Person was one Party; Item, that in the same Fair the University had the Oversight, Correction, and Punishment of all Weights and Measures, of all Manner of Victuals, of all Regrators and Forestallors.

Knit Stockings were first brought to this Fair in 1565, and Wove Stockings in 1600.

Item, it was determined that Spices be counted Victuals.

The Voyages of Drake and Cavendish round the World, and the Colony of New England, settled at the sole Expences of Sir Walter Raleigh, in extending the Commerce and Navigation of these Kingdoms, procured to England Commodities and Articles of Luxury unknown before; every Year exhibited at Sturbridge new Products from beyond the East and the West of the Atlantic Ocean.

The Queen visited Cambridge, and made an elegant Speech in Latin to the University.

Several of the Flemings, persecuted by the Court of Spain, found an Asylum in England, and brought with them their  
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Manufactures and their Industry, which more than repaid the Protection they found. Some of them contributed to make Sturbridge the most frequented Woolstaple in the World.

Some Juglers, Minstrels, and Gipsies pretending Skill in Palmistry, were by the Mayor's Court ordered to be whipped at the Fair in 1602, according to Stat. 39. Eliz. 4.

John Edmunds, Mayor of Cambridge, died suddenly in his Booth in 1605. This Year Hackney Coaches from London plyed for the first Time at the Fair.

A few Years after the Accession of James I. to the Crown, the Scotch Pedlars resorted constantly to Sturbridge Fair, and brought thither their small Wares and their Bagpipes: those who came never returned; and the Number of Scotch in London, which in the Year 1567 did not exceed Fifty-eight, now amounted to several Thousands.

The People of the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey supplied also the Fair with Knit Stockings.

The disastrous Reign of Charles I. which armed one Part of the Nation against the other, put a Stop to all commercial Intercourse in the Kingdom, and reduced Sturbridge Fair to the lowest Ebb. During the puritanical Govern-

ment of Cromwell, enthusiastic Preachers inveighed there against all public Shews and Diversions. In the Year 1629 the great Plague in Cambridge prevented Traders from keeping the Fair.

Tea, which the Lords Arlington and Ossory had first brought from Holland towards the End of the last Century, was sold at first for Sixty Shillings the Pound. As it became universal in the Kingdom, a great Quantity was sold at Sturbridge Fair after the Restoration. In 1665 Sturbridge Fair was again omitted on Account of the Plague.

The Arts of Peace began to return, as soon as Fanaticism and Faction, with all their Train of melancholy Terrors, were dispelled, but unhappily the Arts of Luxury entered with them.

The Manufactures of Manchester, Glass, Copper, Steel, Paper Hats, and Stockings, were now brought to Perfection, and sold at Sturbridge. Upon the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz, the Protestants of France came in great Numbers to settle here, and introduced the Manufactory of Spitalfields, and several others. The King came to Newmarket Oct. 4, 1671, and in 1680 he came to Cambridge with his Queen Sept. 22.

In 1686 the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge was summoned before the Ecclesiastical



fiastical Court, for having refused to admit one Francis, a Benedictine Monk, to the Degree of Master of Arts; the Vice Chancellor was deprived of his Office, but the University persisted in their Refusal, and the King thought proper to desist from his Purpose. The Vice Chancellor's Court was not this Year held at the Fair.

The Dutch Traders resorted constantly to Sturbridge Fair, in the Reign of King William, and sold there their Toys, their Cheese, and their Pipes. The Act for repairing the Highways in the County of Cambridge was revived in this Reign, and put in Execution in 1689. King William came to Cambridge from Newmarket April 10th.

Queen Anne's Wars, however successful, were very detrimental to the interior Trade of the Kingdom. In 1704 the Queen came to Cambridge from Newmarket, April the 16th. An Act of Parliament passed in her Reign, to make the River Cam navigable from Clayhithe to Queen's Mill in Cambridge. By this Act the Chancellor of Cambridge, or his Deputy, Heads of Colleges, or their Deputies, were authoris'd, with the Mayor of Cambridge, Aldermen, and Justices, to chuse eleven Persons to be Conservators of the said River Cam. This Act proved  
very

very beneficial to those who sent their Goods by Water to Sturbridge Fair.

In 1717 George I. came to Cambridge the Sixth of October, and was presented with a Purse and Fifty broad Pieces of Gold.

In 1728 George II. came hither, and was presented as before.

In 1733 an Act passed constituting the Vice Chancellor and Mayor of Cambridge, Justices of the Peace for the County.

For these twenty Years past Sturbridge Fair has been upon the Decline. A heavy Load of Taxes entailed upon the People ever since the last War, the exorbitant Price of Provisions, the easy Communication with all commercial Cities and manufacturing Towns, the great Increase of Land Carriages, the navigable Canals lately cut, and the Number of Riders from the Capital and other trading Places, who take Orders for all Kinds of Merchandise all over the Kingdom, have ruined all the Fairs. The interior Trade and foreign Commerce are now carried on in a much more extensive Plan than formerly. The principal Towns in every County, supplied with Goods all the little Shops of the Environs, and very few had a Correspondence with the principal Places of Traffic. Now instead of buying their Goods from the third and fourth Hand, the little Shopkeepers even of ob-  
scure

scure Villages have them from the first. When the Fair comes, which formerly supplied the County of Cambridge with all the Commodities, and the Articles of Luxury fit for Sale, the Tradesmen are overstocked, and the Majority of them, obliged to keep their Money to pay at fixed Terms their Correspondents, have none to spare, even in Case of an advantageous Purchase; as for foreign Commodities, several Tradesmen of the very inland Counties procure them from the Source. Thus the Fairs are become useless, and excepted some Gentlemen, Farmers, and Labourers, who buy at these Places a few Trinkets, and useful Goods, few capital Tradesmen deal with those who keep the Fairs, for the Reasons I have mentioned. As it will not pay Strangers to come far off with a great Quantity of Goods, Sturbridge Fair, like all others, will decrease yearly, and perhaps the next Century this famous Mart, like all other sublunary Establishments, will be known only by Tradition.

The Author wishes heartily Success to all the People concerned in its Prosperity, as the Expences and the Fatigue of a long Journey, with the Waste of their Goods and Loss of Time, cannot be compensated but by a great Vent.

F I N I S.

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